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Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

SOUTH VIETNAM: Communists go ahead with cease-fire preparations. (Page 1)

ARGENTINA: Lanusse and Peron maneuver warily as stalemate develops. (Page 3)

LAOS-CHINA: More roadbuilding in northwest Laos. (Page 5)

WEST GERMANY: Voting rights sought for West Berlin representatives. (Page 6)

DENMARK: Defense policy becomes lively political issue. (Page 7)

ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA: Border dispute in uneasy stand-off. (Page 8)

MAURITANIA: Student criticism of government increasing. (Page 9)

PORTUGAL: Police powers curtailed (Page 10)

~~SECRET~~

SOUTH VIETNAM: The Communists reportedly are holding meetings of senior cadre throughout the country to discuss cease-fire preparations and to assess local strengths and weaknesses.

A principal aim of the meetings, [redacted] is to explain the reasons behind the postponement of the 31 October cease-fire date and to reassure cadre that a settlement is in the offing. [redacted]

there are signs that they are no longer sure how much time they will have between an announcement of a cease-fire and its implementation.

[redacted] the enemy has worked out a three-phase cease-fire scenario. First, senior cadre will be infiltrated into hamlets and villages prior to the cease-fire announcement. When the announcement is made, Communist main and local forces will attempt to seize and hold villages and hamlets. Then, senior cadre will use undercover agents already in place to organize pro-Communist demonstrations. During the third phase, which allegedly may last several years, the areas under Viet Cong control would be organized and "Liberation Front Committees" would be set up.

There often is a considerable gap between Communist intentions and capabilities, [redacted]

[redacted] Communist commanders reportedly have criticized local military and political leaders for poor past performance and have called for sharp improvement. Some briefers have cited the current delay as a good opportunity for local Viet Cong units to strengthen their over-all capabilities.

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SECRET

Throughout these meetings, considerable attention has been given to the role of legal cadre-- Viet Cong agents with legal documentation already living in government-controlled areas. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] their past performance does not give an impression of extensive subversive capability.
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25X1

30 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

2

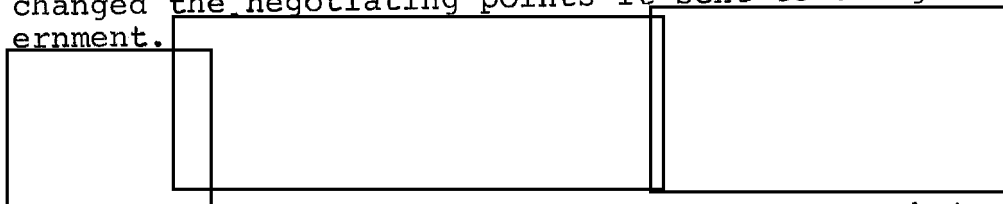
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ARGENTINA: President Lanusse and Juan Peron continue to maneuver warily, each seeking to take advantage of the other's weaknesses or mistakes.

Little has been accomplished toward a political agreement since Peron arrived in Buenos Aires nearly two weeks ago. Both he and Lanusse still appear to believe that an agreement is desirable and possible, but neither seems willing to take the first step toward breaking the stalemate that has developed. In fact, both appear to be stalling in the hope that divisions in their opponent's camp will give them the upper hand in political negotiations.

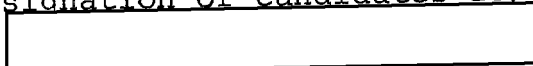
The interparty working group organized by Peron to strengthen his hand vis-a-vis Lanusse and the military reportedly has developed divisions. With each member party pressing for adoption of its own narrow political position, the group three times changed the negotiating points it sent to the government.



The differences within the armed forces that were created by Peron's arrival and the freedom he was given by President Lanusse apparently have been smoothed over by Lanusse's adroit handling of matters.



Lanusse appears to have gained a slight advantage over Peron by his good press relations and a show of military unity. The real test of strength will come, however, if and when serious negotiations begin on the designation of candidates for the March elections.



30 Nov 72

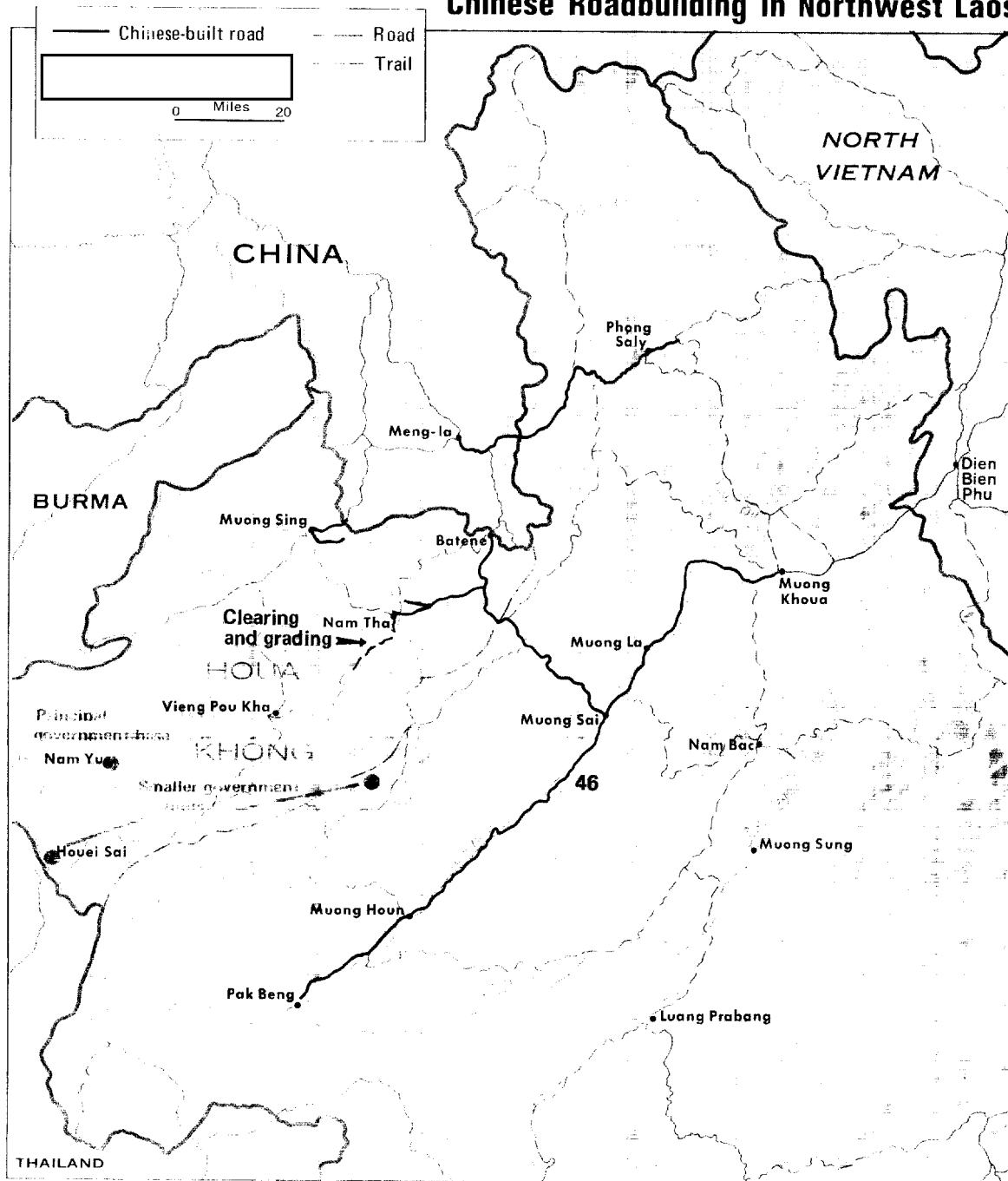
Central Intelligence Bulletin

3

SECRET

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Chinese Roadbuilding in Northwest Laos



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LAOS-CHINA: The Chinese are apparently extending their road net in northwest Laos.

25X1

[redacted] shows intermittent clearing and initial grading for about 12 miles along the alignment of old Route 3 extending southwest from Nam Tha, a Pathet Lao administrative center near the Chinese border. The road extension will improve Pathet Lao access to Houa Khong Province, where several government garrisons are located. Preliminary construction has already covered half the distance between Nam Tha and Vieng Pou Kha, a former government refugee center. Vieng Pou Kha was overrun by Pathet Lao forces on 16 November-- apparently to clear the way for the road extension.

The Chinese have undertaken little other significant construction in the northwest so far this dry season. Construction crews are continuing work on a segment from Muong Sing to Nam Tha, and the Chinese are continuing to improve Route 46 north of Pak Beng on the Mekong River, but they have made no move to go beyond Pak Beng. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

30 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

5

SECRET

SECRET

WEST GERMANY: Officials in West Berlin and Bonn will soon suggest again that West Berlin's representatives in parliament be given full voting rights.

The issue has been discussed many times in the past. A West Berlin Senat official, Horst Grabert, told the Western allies on 29 November that Mayor Schuetz and officials in Bonn will formally request allied concurrence.

West Berlin's 22 representatives in the Bundestag have been permitted to sit on committees and vote on procedural questions, but have not been allowed to vote on substantive matters. All West German political parties have advocated full voting rights for the Berlin representatives but, for domestic political reasons, Christian Democratic leaders have demanded that the Berlin deputies also be elected directly. At present, the Berlin House of Representatives selects the deputies. When the Bundestag reconvenes, 13 Berliners will join the ranks of the governing coalition parties and nine will join the opposition. Because the Brandt government will have a substantial parliamentary majority, it is possible that the Christian Democrats will not insist on direct elections at this time.

The British and French in the past have opposed granting full voting rights to Berliners, and even if the Western allies now concur in the West German proposal, it might be difficult to obtain Moscow's agreement. The Soviets have agreed that existing ties between Bonn and West Berlin can be maintained, but they have consistently opposed an expansion of those ties and could charge that such a change would be a violation of the Four Power Berlin Agreement.

25X1

SECRET

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DENMARK: The political parties have yet to find a compromise on the Social Democratic government's defense reorganization proposal, which has again become a lively political issue, but some defense reductions ultimately seem likely.

The proposal would reduce the standing army from 13,000 to 7,000 men, limit the navy to small vessels, and reduce the air force from nine to six tactical units. The conscription period and the size of future defense budgets, though not part of the proposal, are also at issue.

The reorganization was first submitted to parliament last February. It was assigned to committee and largely forgotten by the public. Active committee consideration resumed this fall, and press revelations of NATO's critical reaction rekindled public attention.

The minority government normally relies on a leftist party for its parliamentary majorities, but it cannot do so in this case, because the Socialist Peoples' Party opposes any defense effort. Thus, the government must find support from among the three non-socialist parties that formed the last government. Of these, however, the party closest to the Social Democrats is reluctant to break ranks with its previous partners, because early national elections are possible, and they could offer the previous coalition a chance to return to power.

The widely divergent positions of the four parties, and the public attention the issues are getting, suggest that the defense minister is overly optimistic in predicting a compromise before Christmas. Nevertheless, all of the parties are genuinely interested in reaching a compromise and getting the issue out of the way before any elections.

25X1

30 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

7

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA: The two countries are attempting to negotiate a solution to an uneasy military standoff in a disputed border area.

Early last week an Ethiopian military unit moved into a village along Ethiopia's southeastern border with Somalia. Both countries claim the village, and each has since moved additional troops to the area.

Although both countries appear unwilling to back down, neither is eager to become involved in an armed clash. Ethiopian troops are under orders to avoid incidents, and officials from both countries are now negotiating. According to the US defense attaché in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopians are not overly alarmed by the situation. No major troop movements or unusual security precautions have been evident in Mogadiscio.

The border has long been in dispute. The current lines were established by treaties drawn up at the turn of the century by Ethiopia, Italy, and the UK; the latter two were colonial powers in Somalia. The Somalis have never recognized the border, and they have long-standing claims to parts of Ethiopia inhabited by ethnic Somalis. Several border clashes occurred in the early 1960s, but relations between Mogadiscio and Addis Ababa have generally been correct since a detente was arranged in 1968.

The border move by the Ethiopians may be an attempt to reinforce their claims to the border area where both countries recently have been prospecting for oil.

30 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

8

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

MAURITANIA: Students, who have long been unhappy over the government's education policies, are becoming more and more critical of the way President Ould Daddah is running the country.

25X1

Schools reopened for this academic year on 13 November after several postponements because officials feared renewed demonstrations growing out of student complaints of lack of scholarships, inadequate facilities, and poor living conditions. Some minor demonstrations have occurred in Nouakchott during the past few weeks. Moreover, although the schools are outwardly calm, a student strike has produced 50-percent absenteeism, and armed soldiers are patrolling the corridors. Student strikes over the past four years have repeatedly closed the secondary schools, and the government last January warned that harsh measures would be taken against agitators. Seven students were inducted into the army in August for participating in demonstrations.

25X1

Politically the students are dissatisfied with the government's conservative domestic policies, especially its tolerance of foreign, mainly French, domination of the modern sector of the economy. Dissidents in the secondary schools are being encouraged by university activists who have refused to return to their studies abroad. The government's use of military conscription to enforce discipline has heightened opposition.

25X1

The government may move to satisfy student grievances over inadequate facilities, but it cannot deal so easily with demands for reforms in the French-oriented curriculum; nor can the traditionally Muslim leadership be expected to be sympathetic to the resistance of black students to obligatory Arabic-language study. There are as yet no indications that any credible contenders for Ould Daddah's position are trying to take advantage of the student unrest to move against him. The president could face a more serious challenge, however, if the students join forces with unionists who are resisting the current move to incorporate their national organization into the ruling political party.

25X1

30 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

9

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25X1

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PORTUGAL: The Caetano government has abolished the power of the police to prolong the detention of political prisoners. This move headed off an adverse resolution from an unprecedented national lawyers' congress held in Lisbon last week. The lawyers are expected to push for additional civil liberties reforms, for example, extending the new decree to the overseas provinces. Having relaxed its decree of last month that strengthened the powers of the police, the government will be reluctant to make further concessions soon. The lawyers, meanwhile, are prepared for a long-term campaign for civil rights.

25X1

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